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DO 501 Basic Christian Doctrine

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DO 501
BASIC CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

Spring Semester 2000
ATS - Florida
Wednesday 9:00-11:40 a.m.
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PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION

This is an introductory course that bases the theological formation of students upon biblical data as well as upon the classical Christian tradition, contemporary theology, and Wesleyan theological distinctives with a view to helping students grasp the importance of theology for the practice of ministry.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To understand and be able to use the basic vocabulary and concepts of systematic theology;
2. To become acquainted with the range of literature related to the study of systematic theology;
3. To understand the classical tradition of systematic theology;
4. To engage the student in contemporary forms of theology;
5. To highlight the doctrinal emphases of Asbury Theological Seminary;
6. To see the practical implications of systematic theology for the Christian life;
7. To inspire a love for God's truth and to cultivate a sense of appreciation for God's personal self-introduction in the biblical history of salvation.

SCHEDULE/OUTLINE

Wed Feb 09	Introductions/Overview The Meaning and Purpose of Theology Reading: 2 Thess. 2:15; 1 Tim. 1:1-18; 2 Tim. 1:11-14 Recommended Supplemental Reading: J. J. Mueller, <i>What is Theology?</i> Lesslie Newbigin, <i>Proper Confidence</i> James McClendon, <i>Biography as Theology</i>
Wed Feb 16	Theology: The Essence of Grace (Doctrine of God) Reading: Lawson, Chapter 1 Recommended Supplemental Reading: Rudolf Otto, <i>The Idea of the Holy</i> Aida & William Spencer, <i>The Global God</i> Thomas Oden, <i>The Living God</i> Donald Bloesch, <i>God the Almighty</i> Jürgen Moltmann, <i>The Trinity and the Kingdom</i>

- Wed Feb 23 Christology: The Embodiment of Grace (The Person of Christ)
- Reading: Lawson, Chapter 2
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
- D. M. Baillie, *God Was In Christ*
 - Thomas Oden, *The Word of Life*
 - Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*
 - Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*
- Wed Mar 01 Christology: The Embodiment of Grace (The Work of Christ)
Examination One **Discussion**
- Reading: Lawson, Chapters 3 & 4
Grenz, selected terms
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
- Gustav Aulén, *Christus Victor*
 - D. M. Baillie, *God Was In Christ*
 - Frances Young, *Can These Dry Bones Live?*
 - Jürgen Moltmann, *The Crucified God*
 - Leon Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament*
 - John Stott, *The Cross of Christ*
 - John Jansen, *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*
 - Walter Kunneth, *The Theology of the Resurrection*
- Wed Mar 08 Pneumatology: The Activity of Grace (Doctrine of the Holy Spirit)
- Reading: Lawson, Chapter 5
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
- William Barclay, *The Promise of the Spirit*
 - Thomas Oden, *Life in the Spirit*
 - Leona Choy, *Powerlines*
 - Larry Wood, *Pentecostal Grace*,
 - Clark Pinnock, *The Flame of Love*
- Wed Mar 15 Soteriology: The Appropriation of Grace (Doctrine of Salvation)
- Reading: Lawson, Chapter 9
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
- Steve Harper, *Wesley's Message for Today*
 - Reuel Howe, *Man's Need and God's Action*
 - Melvin Dieter, ed., *Five Views of Sanctification*
 - William Sangster, *The Path to Perfection*
 - Maxie Dunnam, *Going on to Salvation*

- Wed Mar 22 Ecclesiology: The Community of Grace (Doctrine of the Church)
 Reading: Lawson, Chapter 6
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
 Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church*
 Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God*
 Donald Miller, *The Nature of Mission of the Church*
 J. Robert Nelson, *The Realm of Redemption*
- Wed Mar 29 Doxology: The Celebration of Grace (Doctrine of Worship)
 Examination Two **Discussion**
- Reading: Lawson, Chapters 7 & 8
 Grenz, selected terms
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
 Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology*
 Donald Bloesch, *Holy Scripture*
 I. Howard Marshall, *Biblical Inspiration*
 Don Saliers, *Worship Come to Its Senses*
 James White, *The Worldliness of Worship*
- READING WEEK BREAK
- Wed Apr 12 Diakonology: The Sharing of Grace (Doctrine of Ministry)
- Reading: [Review Lawson, Chapter 6]
 Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
 Henri Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*
 Henri Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*
 Thomas O'Meara, *A Theology of Ministry*
 Norman Pittenger, *The Ministry of All Christians*
 Hendrik Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity*
 James Garlow, *Partners in Ministry*
- Wed Apr 19 Spirituality: The Signs and Means of Grace (Prayer and Sacraments)
 Reading: Lawson, Chapter 7
 Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry
- Recommended Supplemental Reading:
 Donald English, *The Meaning of the Warmed Heart*
 D. M. Baillie, *Theology of the Sacraments*
 Rob Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace*
 Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*
 Henry Knight, *The Presence of God in the Christian Life*

- Wed Apr 26 Missiology: The Vitality of Grace (Mission and Service)
- Reading: Newbigin, Chapters 3-6, 8
 Recommended Supplemental Reading:
 H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*
 David Bosch, *Believing in the Future*
 Joseph Donders, *Charged with the Spirit*
 J. Andrew Kirk, *Mission of Theology/Theology as Mission*
- Wed May 03 Eschatology: The Victory of Grace (Doctrine of Last Things)
 Examination Three **Discussion**
- Reading: Lawson, Chapter 10
 Grenz, selected terms
 Recommended Supplemental Reading:
 Millard Erickson, *Contemporary Options in Eschatology*
 Geoffrey Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology*
- Wed May 10 Conclusion: Living Options in Christian Theology
 Closing Eucharist

RESOURCES

Required Texts:

- John Lawson, *Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Lawson)
 Stanley Grenz, David Guretzki, & C.F. Nordling, eds.,
 Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms (Grenz)
Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry
 Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret* (Newbigin)

Supplemental Basic Introductions to Christian Theology:

- Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline*
 Earl Hunt, *I Have Believed*
 John Lawson, *An Evangelical Faith for Today*
 C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
 Jan Lochman, *The Faith We Confess: An Ecumenical Dogmatics*
 Alister McGrath, *I Believe*
 John Stott, *Basic Christianity*
 Helmut Thielicke, *I Believe*
 John Whale, *Christian Doctrine*

Reference Works of Note:

- A. Cohen & M. Halverson, eds., *A Handbook of Christian Theology*
 Hubert Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of Christian Doctrine*
 Van Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms*
 William Horndern, *A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology*
 H. R. Mackintosh, *Modern Types of Theology*
 D. Musser & J. Price, eds., *A New Handbook of Christian Theology*
 Alvin Porteous, *Prophetic Voices in Contemporary Theology*
 Alan Richardson & John Bowden, eds., *Dictionary of Christian Theology*

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

1. **General Class Participation.** Your lively and informed participation in all class activities is valuable for you and contributes to the edification of all. Active involvement in class will be taken into account in determining final grades. There are **three** formal discussions scheduled in the syllabus. Sometimes this discussion will take place in small groups, sometimes within the context of the entire class. Attendance will be taken at these sessions.

2. **Reflection Papers (50%).** Each student is required to complete **five** Reflection Papers out of the *eleven* options indicated in the syllabus. Each assignment (valued at 10% of your final grade) is due on the day indicated. No exceptions! The primary means of fulfilling this requirement is to prepare standard Reflection Papers, using the Guidelines provided separately. Some of you may have a creative bent that you would like to exercise. Therefore, you may choose to do some sort of creative reflection on **any two, but no more than two** of these assignments. “Creative reflection” is a term that covers a multitude of possibilities! You may wish to submit poetry, artwork, dramas, multi-media or power point presentations, music, liturgical items, etc., etc. The only stipulation associated with this option is that:
you submit an “Abstract” of the text upon which you are reflecting
(see Reflection Paper Guidelines), and
you include a concise narrative of **two pages** describing your project and its meaning in light of the topic/text.

3. **Specialized Book Report (10%).** Each student must complete **one** book report on a particular area of specialization in Christian theology (e.g., Christology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology, etc.). This report must be **four pages** (typed and double-spaced), and is due ***no later than Wednesday, May 10***. There is no particular format stipulated for this Report, simply the need to demonstrate a clear knowledge of and dialogue with the book in question. The final page of the Report must deal with the question, How can this book or any aspect of its content be applied directly to some aspect of my ministry? Students are free to choose from any of the books listed in the syllabus under “Recommended Supplemental Reading,” or consult with the instructor concerning books of interest not listed here.

4. **Examinations (30%).** There will be three examinations that cover the material of the Grenz text. Each exam will be valued at 10% of the final grade and will be administered:

Wed Mar 01 Examination One
Wed Mar 29 Examination Two
Wed May 03 Examination Three

5. **Personal Credo (10%).** It is important to be able to articulate your own theology in a concise and coherent statement of faith. Each student, therefore, will be required to write a **one page** (single-spaced) statement of faith or personal credo. The statement, the culmination of the work of this course, should include those aspects of the Christian faith that are owned and considered essential aspects of the student’s living faith. Further direction will be given concerning the specific aspects of this assignment in the context of the course.

The standards of conduct that are articulated in the Student Handbook concerning academic matters are important to the integrity of our community and the high ethical standards we expect of those who are preparing for Christian ministry. Abuse of these policies will be handled accordingly. In addition to these standards, it is important for you to realize that due dates will be strictly enforced, both for your good and for mine. If you encounter difficulties in the ordering of your tasks and responsibilities, the critical key is to “talk to me.” In most cases you will find me extremely empathetic and supportive. I want to help you learn and progress toward your goals related to ministry. If you don’t communicate your need for an “extension” before a due date, I have no recourse but to penalize for the late work. Please, talk to me!

For me, whatever more it is, at rock bottom
Christianity is “Faith Seeking Understanding.”
And the *scandalon* is –
as the Apostle Paul first saw and enforced
upon the attention of the Corinthians –
that appropriating faith in
“the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,”
however alien to the wisdom of the world,
is just exactly the kind of response suited to that unspeakable gift
which passes all human understanding.
For the apostle, faith is acceptance of the
incomprehensible grace of God in Christ.
Accordingly, St. Paul saw that it was indeed a God-given starting-point,
from which, not to which enlightenment proceeds.
This too, is what John Wesley, at length, arrived at
and this meant new comprehension of
the whole range of human experience –
its depravity without Christ,
its radical promise of renovation through Christ –
and this, both for the individual and for societal renewal.

(Robert E. Cushman)

*Prepare to encounter God’s grace anew,
in the Person of Christ
and through the power of the Spirit,
as we make our journey together!*

REFLECTION PAPER GUIDELINES

The purpose of a reflection paper is to enter into a dialog with the material, that is to say, the person or community that has communicated their thoughts, feelings, and actions to you. Reflection, therefore, is an exciting adventure, a conversation, a means of growth. It is one of the important ways by which we can explore our own “inner world” and become open to God’s transforming power in our lives as we encounter others with whom we both agree and disagree.

A Reflection Paper in this course has a prescribed format. It should be four pages (typed and double-spaced) and divided into four distinct sections (one page each), headed with the titles, ABSTRACT, ANALYSIS, ANECDOTE, and APPLICATION. *(The narrative description of each section that follows is based on the previous work of Dr. Donald Joy and Dr. Steve Seamands.)*

ABSTRACT (Readers’ Digest Summary). Simply summarize the content of the assigned reading in your own words. There should be no personal commentary or attempt to evaluate the content of the material. Summarize what the author says. Include as many of the key concepts and ideas as you can. Strive to be both comprehensive and concise. The summary should be stylistically correct, coherent and clear. Communicate the essence of the author’s work in your own language and symbols. If and when you do quote directly from the source (which should be extremely minimal, if at all), use explicit and visible quote marks. (Page One)

ANALYSIS. What questions came to mind as you worked your way through the material. It would be helpful to you if you were to keep a rough note sheet at hand as you read so you can write them down. In this section, list and briefly engage three or four of these central questions. Questions may be critical in nature, emerging out of spontaneous curiosity, essentially informational, or related to a serious plumbing of the depths of issues involved. Whatever the nature of your questions, make sure that they relate directly to the material content of the reading. (Page Two)

ANECDOTE. Describe one or two personal experiences which reading this material has brought to mind. Here is your chance to be a storyteller. Relate the experiences in “first person,” describing action, quoting exact words you remember hearing or saying. Be as specific and concrete as possible. Interface these memories directly with the material. Why are these memories related to the reading? What is it that has elicited this memory? If possible, here is an excellent opportunity to draw your experiences out of vocational circumstances. How do the “pastoral memories or accounts” relate to the issues that arise in the reading. The presupposition here is that if you can connect what you are reading and hearing with what you have previously lived or observed, you will be profoundly changed in the process. Here is where genuine insight can occur most meaningfully. (Page Three)

APPLICATION. So what are you going to do about all of this, anyway? Learning that is related to ministry must lead to “acts of piety and mercy, whether these are transformative actions for your inner person or acquired skills and methods that have an impact on the lives of other people. In this section, describe what you feel called to do in response to what you have discovered in this reflective process. What has the Lord laid upon your heart? How can you translate that “word” or “call” into concrete action? To use a metaphor to help explain the ideal; you need a MAST upon which to attach this new sail into which the Spirit can blow. Whatever your action is, it should be Masurable, Attainable, Specific, and able to be accomplished within a given Timeframe. To provide a specific example, “For the next month during my times of prayer, I will meditate on a different attribute of God for five minutes.” Here is another opportunity to relate your learning to some specific aspect of your vocation or setting of ministry as well. Do not feel compelled to fill this final page, but some reflection upon why this action is necessary will be helpful to you. (Page Four)

REFLECTION PAPER EVALUATION

NAME _____

DATE _____

ABSTRACT

Written from the original author's point of view; no commentary; no evaluation of content. Concise, linguistically and stylistically correct, coherent, and clear.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

Included the all of the key concepts in the assigned material in the summary.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

ANALYSIS

Honest interrogation of conceptual or factual material. Lists and briefly engages three or four central questions. Dialog is related directly to the material content of the reading.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

ANECDOTE

Describes one or two personal experiences and interfaces these memories directly with the material. Wherever possible draws experiences out of vocational settings.

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

APPLICATION

Detailed report of something you have already done or need to do if you are to obey the insight or truth that God has revealed to you in the reflective process. Actions should be specific and measurable (MAST).

0 ---- 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 ---- 7 ---- 8 ---- 9 ---- 10

GRADE _____

REFLECTION PAPER OPTIONS

- Wed Feb 16 Theology: The Essence of Grace (Doctrine of God)
 Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God*, 183-99
 Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, 1-40
 Psalm 139:7-12
- Wed Feb 23 Christology: The Embodiment of Grace (The Person of Christ)
 D. M. Baillie, *God Was In Christ*, 106-132
 Phil 2:5-11
- Wed Mar 01 Christology: The Embodiment of Grace (The Work of Christ)
 D. M. Baillie, *God Was In Christ*, 157-202
 Rom. 6:1-11
- Wed Mar 08 Pneumatology: The Activity of Grace (Doctrine of the Holy Spirit)
 J. Robert Nelson, *The Realm of Redemption*, 37-66
 John 16:12-15
- Wed Mar 15 Soteriology: The Appropriation of Grace (Doctrine of Salvation)
 Steve Harper, *Wesley's Message for Today* (entirety) or
 Reuel Howe, *Man's Need and God's Action*, 49-119
 Matt. 20:1-16
- Wed Mar 22 Ecclesiology: The Community of Grace (Doctrine of the Church)
 J. Robert Nelson, *The Realm of Redemption*, 67-104
 John 15:1-12
- Wed Mar 29 Doxology: The Celebration of Grace (Doctrine of Worship)
 James White, *The Worldliness of Worship*, 3-47
 Isa. 6:1-6
- Wed Apr 12 Diakonomy: The Sharing of Grace (Doctrine of Ministry)
 Henri Nouwen, *Wounded Healer*, one of any of the four chapters
 John 13:3-15
- Wed Apr 19 Spirituality: The Signs and Means of Grace (Prayer and Sacraments)

 Will Willimon, *Sunday Dinner*, 13-44
 Acts 2:43-47
- Wed Apr 26 Missiology: The Vitality of Grace (Mission and Service)
 David Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 368-393
 Matt. 25:34-40
- Wed May 03 Eschatology: The Victory of Grace (Doctrine of Last Things)
 Geoffrey Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology*, 94-122
 Rev. 21:1-6